

Good Friday Evening. Below you will find the November 15, 2019 Federal Advocacy & Public Policy update.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of public education in the Commonwealth. Have a very good weekend!

Best,

JT

Federal Advocacy & Public Policy Update

November 15, 2019

Congressional Update

House and Senate Leaders Inching Toward Temporary Funding Deal

This week, House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) announced that congressional leaders plan to pass a second stopgap spending bill that would fund government operations through December 20. This step would provide Senate and House negotiators needed additional time to complete the fiscal year 2020 appropriations process, including finalizing the U.S. Department of Education's budget. The current temporary funding law expires on November 21, so Congress must act next week to provide additional short-term funding to avoid a government shutdown. Even if Congress is able to extend temporary funding until December 20, there is no guarantee that congressional leaders will be able to overcome the policy and political hurdles that have impeded the process all year, which could mean that federal programs will continue operating at FY19 levels well into 2020.

House Education Committee Focused on Apprenticeship and Student Loans

Next Wednesday, the House Education and Labor Committee's Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment plans to hold a hearing titled "Examining the Policies and Priorities of the Labor Department's Apprenticeship Program." NSBA expects the hearing to include a discussion about the use of apprenticeship programs to build the early childhood educator workforce. States like Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Vermont use Registered Apprenticeship programs to equip early childhood educators with new skills and credentials. Witnesses have not yet been announced for the apprenticeship hearing, but interested school district leaders can watch the event's livestream and archive [here](#). The House Education and Labor Committee is also planning a hearing titled "'With Extreme Displeasure': Examining the Education Department's Refusal to Provide Debt Relief to Defrauded Students". Education Secretary Betsy DeVos was invited to testify, but as of today she has only agreed to provide the documents requested by the committee. The livestream and archive of the second hearing can be accessed [here](#).

House Subcommittee Approves Bill Targeting Youth Tobacco Use

The House Committee on Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee passed H.R. 2339, "Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019," which would ban flavored tobacco products, increase the purchasing age for e-cigarettes to 21, and prohibit online sales of all tobacco products. The Subcommittee also included an amendment that would require the CDC to develop a grant program for smoking cessation program to medically underserved communities, particularly racial minorities. The subcommittee's action follows a hearing held this week by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee where Republican and Democratic senators, including Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) pressed the Food and Drug Administration to regulate e-cigarettes.

During the Senate HELP Committee's hearing on e-cigarettes and vaping, Chairman Alexander stated that more than 1.6 million individuals are using e-cigarettes. He and Ranking Member Murray stated that e-cigarettes are tobacco products, and are causing serious health concerns, including increased use among students. Senator Murray cited that 1 in 4 high school students and 1 in 10 middle school students are using e-cigarettes.

Administration Update

Secretary DeVos Announces new NAGB Board Members

Secretary DeVos announced the appointment of seven leaders to the National Assessment Governing Board. NAGB [sets policy for NAEP](#), which is then administered by the National Center for Education Statistics. The board members' terms began on October 1, 2019 and will conclude on September 30, 2023. Six of the seven appointments are new members, with one reappointment. Read more about the members and their bios [here](#).

Notable K-12 Bills

[H.R.5067](#) To transition military veterans into new careers in education, and for other purposes. Sponsor: [Rep. Meadows, Mark \[R-NC-11\]](#)

[H.R.4933](#) Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Amendment Act Sponsor: [Rep. Veasey, Marc A. \[D-TX-33\]](#)

[H.R.4684](#) Universal School Meals Program Act of 2019 Sponsor: [Rep. Omar, Ilhan \[D-MN-5\]](#)

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